

OFFICE OF THE U.S. HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR GERMANY
Press Attache's Office
Mehlem

Gen Con

Press Release No. 979
7 October 1953

Mehlem a/Rhein
Tel: 3366

For Immediate Release

U.S. Congressmen Study Refugee Problem

A Special Subcommittee of the House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary left Bonn last night to visit refugee installations in Muenberg, Munich and along the Bavarian-Czech border. The Subcommittee spent two days in Bonn conferring with German Government officials and staff members of the U.S. High Commission on questions concerning the administration of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, the operation of the Escapee Program under the Mutual Security Act and current activities of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration.

Chairman of the Subcommittee is Rep. Chauncey W. Reed (R., Ill.); other members of the Subcommittee include Rep. Edgar A. Jonas (R., Ill.), Rep. Francis E. Walter (D., Pa.) and Rep. J. Frank Wilson (D., Texas). Mr. Walter H. Besterman is the Staff Director for the Subcommittee.

On Tuesday morning, October 6, following a meeting with Mr. Herve L'Heureux, Supervising Consul-General, and the U.S. Consuls General from Hamburg, Frankfurt, Munich and Berlin, the group attended a luncheon at the home of U.S. High Commissioner James B. Conant. Later the Subcommittee attended the opening of the Parliament of the German Federal Republic and at 5:30 P.M. conferred with State Secretary Dr. Walter Hallstein at the Palais Schaumburg.

The group will depart from Munich by train on Friday, October 8, for Venice where they will attend a meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration.

Before leaving Bonn, Rep. Reed declared:

"The continuing interest of the American people in refugee problems has again been evidenced in the passage of the Refugee Relief Act which provides for the entrance into the United States of more than 200,000 refugees. In these perilous times, the American people are rightfully and deeply concerned with the question of security. It is the proper desire of our citizens and, therefore, the obligation of their lawmakers that we establish every reasonable safeguard to prevent Communists from entering our country to sow the seeds of discord and disintegration among our population. One of the purposes of our trip has been to determine how this concern of ours can be most effectively met. I am happy to state that the leaders of the German Government gave us every assurance of their very great desire to cooperate with American officials in screening those who present themselves as candidates for immigration to the United States under this Act."

(end)

State Dept. declassification & release instructions on file